

a reverse play is selected.

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 32, and 34 are pending and under consideration. No new matter is presented in this Amendment.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

The applicants conducted an interview on April 23, 2009, and presented the arguments outlined below to the Examiner. The Examiner agreed to review the references and conduct an additional search in light of the discussion.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-6, 32 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nonomura (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0108338 A1) in view of Fujita (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,450) and Matsui et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,281,755). The applicants respectfully traverse.

Nonomura, Matsui, and Fujita do not, alone or in combination, disclose all of the limitations of claim 1. For example, the references do not disclose "a sub-audio system time clock counter... independent of the system time clock sequence of the mainstream system time clock counter; wherein... the sub-audio system time clock counter continuously increases even if a user inputs a reverse play or forward play command," as recited in claim 1.

The Examiner concedes that Nonomura does not disclose "a sub-audio system time clock counter... independent of the system time clock sequence of the mainstream system time clock counter," but asserts that Fujita remedies this deficiency. Fujita discloses a recording and reproducing apparatus. As shown in FIG. 1, the apparatus includes a system processor section 54, an STC control section 57, and video, audio, and sub-picture decoder sections 58, 60, and 62, respectively. Each of the video, audio, and sub-picture decoder sections include a system time clock (STC) counter. As shown by the arrows in FIG. 1 and at col. 21, lines 37-67, the values of these STC counters are determined by a system clock reference (SCR) set by the buffer control/STC control section 57:

The video decoder section 58 shown in FIG. 1 comprises an STC timer 58a, registers 58b and 58c, comparators 58d and 58e, and a decoder 58f, as shown in

FIG. 38. The SCR set by the buffer control/STC control section 57 is stored in the STC timer 58a and the time therein is updated by a clock. ...

The sub-picture decoder section 62 shown in FIG. 1 comprises an STC timer 58a, registers 62b and 62c, comparators 62d and 62e, and a decoder 62f, as shown in FIG. 40. The SCR set by the buffer control/STC control section 57 is stored in the STC timer 62a and the time therein is updated by a clock.

The values of the STC timer 58a of the video decoder section 58 and the STC timer 62a of the sub-picture decoder section 62 thus depend on the SCR set by the buffer control/STC control section 57. This SCR is, in turn, received from the system time processor section 54 (col. 20, lines 59-67). Since the values of the STC timer 58a and the STC timer 62a depend upon the same ultimate source (the system time processor section 54), these timers cannot be seen as "independent". Fujita therefore does not remedy the above-noted deficiencies in Nonomura.

With respect to the continuous increasing of the sub-audio system time clock counter "even if a user inputs a reverse play or forward play command", the Examiner admits that neither Nonomura nor Fujita discloses this limitation, but asserts that Matsui remedies this deficiency. Matsui discloses an apparatus for automatically playing a musical instrument, such as a piano (abstract). In the conventional art, such devices could not handle a fast forward or reverse operation, because the pedals could not be operated while the device was fast forwarding and reversing, because the device could not handle such an operation. Matsui discloses using a time counter to determine when to trigger events, such as triggering a pedal (col. 5, lines 26-35):

A key number shows the number of a key where an event should be performed. Key depression force determines the force or the speed of key depression/release at the time of an ON event or an OFF event. Time information is data that indicates the time when the event information should be processed. When such time information corresponds to the value of a time counter (not shown), an event in consonance with the event information that is currently being processed will be performed.

Matsui does not disclose how the time counter operates during fast forward or reverse operations; indeed, the time counter is of so little importance that it is not even shown in the figures. Since Matsui is largely silent as to the operation of the time counter, Matsui does not disclose "wherein... the sub-audio system time clock counter continuously increases even if a user inputs a reverse play or forward play command," as recited in claim 1. Matsui depends on the time counter to determine when to trigger the events (as disclosed above). The time counter would therefore need to be adjusted depending on the operation chosen (fast forward or

reverse) so as to remain synchronized with the event information. A person of ordinary skill in the art would thus have no reason to modify Matsui, Fujita, or Nonomura so as to cause the sub-audio system time clock counter to continuously increase even if a user inputs a reverse play or forward play command, as recited in claim 1.

For the reasons given above, the combination of Nonomura, Fujita, and Matsui, even assuming *arguendo* that it is proper, does not disclose or suggest all of the limitations of claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1. The rejection of these claims should be withdrawn for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

The rejection of claims 32 and 34 should be withdrawn for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 503333.

Respectfully submitted,

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